

**Mayor's Council on Disability  
Chattanooga, Tennessee**

**Minute Meetings  
September 5, 2006**

**Sandra Booher, Chairperson  
Bea Lyons, Vice Chair  
Katie Jones, Secretary  
Jill Hindman, Parliamentarian**

**Board Members:**

**Kim Williams  
Jim Queen  
Dr. Rick Rader  
Mary Ann Schenk  
Kathy Purnell  
Gina Turley  
Jennifer Nichols  
Susan Crisp  
Virginia Piper  
Karl Epperson  
Annie Ruth Palmer**

**Matt Lea, Liaison**

**Assistant to the Mayor for Special Projects**

**Michelle Michaud, Liaison**

**Communications Director Mayor's Office**

**Introductions of various agencies in attendance as follows:**

**Compliance Officer Amanda Stofan, and Director Jacqueline Moss Strong from the City of Chattanooga's Office of Multicultural Affairs are seeking suggestions to better provide centralized service for the disabled community. They would like a time slot for one of our meetings to gain some understanding of what makes this community comfortable and how to smoothly interact with the process so that they can make Chattanooga a more inclusive city.**

**Trisha King with Hamilton County Emergency Services is working on an emergency plan to evacuate specialty populations in the event of an evacuation.**

**Don Allen, Director of Emergency Services for the County, recognizing that we have some weaknesses in our Special Needs groups, is working on a basic emergency plan. It's possible that it would be advantageous to form a subcommittee from the Council to provide key thoughts and ideas to 911.**

**Gary Thornton is the Disability Project navigator with the Career Center, the one-stop Career Center.**

**Carol Martin with Corporate Connections which is a program of the University of Tennessee, paid for by the Tennessee Division of Rehab Services.**

**Julie Ann Crow with Read Chattanooga and Director of Outreach.**

**Dennis Tate, the Neighborhood Relations coordinator with the City of Chattanooga and also serves as chairman of Disaster Services committee for the Red Cross chapter here. The Chapter wishes to be available both as a partner and learning partner in an effort to make family and neighborhood preparedness as strong as it can be. Matt Lea reiterated that the upcoming meetings are free and located at the Trade Center. Among the workshops will be one titled “Disability Issues in Neighborhoods”.**

**Beth Coleman with the Epilepsy Foundation was present on behalf of her client’s interest in emergency preparedness.**

**ADA Celebration was a tremendous success. We expect next year to be even greater with more agencies in attendance. It was estimated that approximately 150 were in attendance. A special thanks was given to Katye Jones and Merrill Lynch who made a major monetary contribution to sponsor the event. We did have some issues with the accessibility of the restroom at the Choo Choo, i.e., turning radius and size of stalls. These concerns were well taken by management and we do hope that next year the facilities will be more accessible. All in all the facility was a great venue to use. Bea Lyons will be presenting pictures to the website for all to see.**

**Go!Fest is October 14<sup>th</sup>. Jill Hindman and Chairperson, Sandra Booher will do a walk thru as to the accessibility of restrooms and etc. One concern of the Council is the lack of talent with disabilities to perform at the event. Three names were submitted to those organizing the event by Chairperson, Sandra Booher and numerous emails were sent but we have had no responses from the Friends of the Festival.**

**911 Board was attended by Bea Lyons, Jill Hindman and Chairperson, Sandra Booher. They appreciate Mr. Allen and the others at 911 for allowing them to attend their September meeting. The concern was stressed that all those with disabilities are included when it is necessary to evacuate. Technology concerns were brought up.**

**Stigma Free Project: Jill Hindman and Dr. Rader are developing criteria and in preliminary discussions to get funding, do some local man-on-the-streets types of interviews to determine awareness of stigma's and its effects.**

**Also, Dr. Rader is in the process of developing a plan with the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga to incorporate a Stigma Free University. He also is talking with Chancellor Brown at the University about a proposal to have the University of Tennessee @ Chattanooga to become the first University to offer mandatory courses on the disability experience for every student at UTC, regardless of their major or professional aspirations Most courses now are usually taken by social workers or premed students or family members of the disabled.**

**This course would be taken as a requirement and hopefully create a greater awareness of the hardships those with disabilities face.**

**One thing the ADA celebration brought out into the open was the issue of accessibility. Chairperson Sandra Booher outlined some issues that will be submitted to the Mayor to keep him informed. Jacqueline Strong Moss will be meeting with the Council to identify accessibility issues and create a centralized process for requests for reasonable accommodations.**

**She has some specific questions about what would make the City more inclusive and would like to attend a meeting and make herself and Amanda, her compliance officer, available.**



**A few members of the Council conducted a training session with the City Inspectors to help people realize a few things that need to be addressed. Physical access is not the only concern, but program access with interpreters and Braille and large print. Under A.D.A., large facilities must have a minimum number of assistive listening devices in addition to providing either the captioning or a sign language interpreter. At the Marriott and Choo Choo these devices have to be requested ahead of time and most peoples do not know they are available.**

**Hopefully the nine committees that are being developed by the Council will be able to help address these issues.**

**Bylaws will be reviewed by the City Attorney for our final approval next meeting.**

**The office of Multicultural Affairs and Legal Aid of East Tennessee are teaming together to provide architects A.D.A. compliance workshops scheduled for December 1<sup>st</sup>. This training will include a former enforcement director for HUD and an architect who actually does compliance work nationally.**

**Bea Lyons had three inquiries from our website. She provided resources and information which they can contact to receive the assistance that they need.**

**Mr. Allen from 911 informed the Council that they have basic emergency plan that's an all hazard plan for this community. After dealing with the evacuees from Katrina, they recognized they had several deficiencies and are rewriting the plan. The revisions are hoped to be finalized by the end of the year.**

**A member of the audience spoke about his passion for inclusion in the school system.**

**It was advised that he communicate by email to Virginia Piper.**

**Very Special Arts, V.S.A is a local Tennessee organization of a National organization and they are hosting a workshop October 7<sup>th</sup> and the 8<sup>th</sup> in Murfreesboro, with artists and employers of artists. Chairperson Sandra Booher has a brochure that's available for anyone to see.**

**Meeting was adjourned, and the next meeting is scheduled for October 2, 2006.**